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University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations, "UM renames Student Health Service for former director" (2000). *University of Montana News Releases, 1928, 1956-present*. 16409.
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NEWS RELEASE

This release is available electronically on INN (News Net.)

Jan. 19, 2000

Contact: Dr. Nancy Fitch, director, Student Health Services, 243-2771.

UM RENAMES STUDENT HEALTH SERVICE FOR FORMER DIRECTOR

MISSOULA --

The Student Health Service building at The University of Montana will be renamed the Dr. Robert B. Curry Health Center on Friday, Jan. 21, during a ceremony honoring Curry for his dedication and service to UM students during his 25 years as director of Student Health Services.

A reception will be held from 4:30 to 7 p.m. at the center, with a formal ceremony scheduled for 5:30 p.m. UM President George Dennison and Vice President for Student Affairs Barbara Hollmann will offer remarks. The public is invited to attend.

The decision to rename the building was sparked by spontaneous expressions from the campus community of praise and gratitude for Curry's compassion and vision, according to Hollmann. Similar comments came to current Student Health Services director Dr. Nancy Fitch, who has spearheaded the renaming effort and will serve as master of ceremonies at the event.

Curry left a private group practice in 1965 to found the health service, Fitch said. It was in a different building and open only a couple of hours a week.

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"Now it's a full-time operation with more than 70 people employed," she said. "And it's got tons of programs," she added, running down the list. They include student assault recovery services as well as dental, medical, pharmacy, health education, and counseling and psychological services.

"It has the widest range of services available to the student ... that I have observed in an institution of this size," said Dennis Murphy, head certified athletic trainer and assistant professor of health and human performance at UM. "In visiting with others in my field of athletic training, this is not the norm."

Curry also was instrumental in establishing an environmental health program for the entire campus in 1968 when the first University sanitarian was hired, and he coordinated a campus jogging program for UM employees and the community that same year. In the '70s he initiated mass screening of the campus for cardiac risk factors and rubella. He held measles vaccination clinics in 1985.

In 1989 he received UM's prized Robert T. Pantzer Award for his "compassion, support and dedication to the campus community and especially the students."

"I cannot relate the number of times this man has assisted our staff and students during his tenure at the University," said Residence Life director Ron Brunell. "Dr. Curry could have been very successful in private practice, and his financial rewards would have been greater, but he chose to continue to work with students because of his dedication and love of college students. ... This is commitment."

The father of five children, Curry grew up in Bloomington, Ind., and earned a

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bachelor's degree in anatomy and physiology from Indiana University in 1955. He received a medical degree there in 1958 and went on to specialize in student health and sports medicine. During 1959-60 he worked as a staff physician at Missoula's Western Montana Clinic and from 1960 to 1965 was part of a private group practice in Missoula.

He officially resigned as health services director at UM in 1990 but continued to work until last year, Fitch said.

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